

Local Wellness Policy: Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are we required to adopt the entire Model Wellness Policy approved by the South Dakota State Board of Education?

No. The local wellness committee must determine the content of each component based on district's current practices, priorities, and future goals. School districts must, at a minimum include the following:

- ① set goals for nutrition education
- ② set goals for physical activity
- ③ set nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages available on school campuses during the school day
- ④ provide assurance that local guidelines for reimbursable school meals meet the program requirements and nutrition standards set forth by federal regulations
- ⑤ set goals for other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness
- ⑥ involve a broad group of members of the community (see question # 2)
- ⑦ draft a plan to measure the implementation and success of policies
- ⑧ designate one or more persons within the district or at each school charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that each school fulfills the district's local wellness policy.

2. Who develops the policy?

Someone at the school needs to be given the authority and responsibility to convene a committee to develop the policy for review and approval by the board. The law requires 1.) parents, 2.) students, 3.) food service representatives, 4.) school board members, 5.) school administrators, 6.) community members to be involved in the process. It is important to involve those groups that will be affected by the policy. It is also encouraged that committees include a school nurse, dietitian or dietary manager, medical professional, teacher/curriculum director, and/or local business representative.

3. Does our policy have to be approved by the State Department of Education?

At this time, there is no requirement for approval by the Department of Education. Your local school board or governing board is responsible for approving the policy. It is expected that the policy will address the required areas as appropriate for the school

4. Are there resources available to assist in developing this policy?

There are many resources available. Go to: <http://doe.sd.gov/oess/cans/training/wellnesspolicy.asp>

5. When must the policy be in place?

The policy must be in place by June 30, 2006 or the first day of school thereafter. Committees must consider the frequency of board meetings and the procedures for policy adoption to ensure that this deadline is met. Local wellness policies are an ongoing project. They should be continuously implemented, evaluated, and updated.

6. When would some of the required areas not be appropriate for a school?

In most instances all required areas will be appropriate for all agencies. Schools that participate only in the Special Milk Program and do not serve any meals could leave out the assurance regarding meals meeting USDA standards.

Schools that currently do not have any vending machines are encouraged to list that as their policy. There are likely solid reasons behind the school's decision to do this, such as not appropriate to offer vending to elementary students, and those could be in the policy.

Schools that do not have a concession stand or sell food in any other manner would not have to establish standards at this time; however, if a decision changes that operation at a later date, the standards would need to be established at that time.